

SUDBURY URBAN DISTRICT

OR

BOROUGH of SUDBURY,

IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF WEST SUFFOLK.]

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1920.

Population (Census 1911) 7,141. Estimated, end of 1919, 7,097 (Registrar General's estimate). Number of Inhabited Houses, 1,792.

Average number of persons per house, 3.94.

Physical site, Valley of the Stour. in the upper chalk formation covered with drift sands, gravels, and brick earth, derived from the boulder clay of general plateau.

Chief Employment of population is Silk Weaving, Mat Making and Corset Making.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The following Vital Statistics are compiled from the returns received from the Registrar General and the District Registrar.

Births.

There were 176 births registered during the year, equivalent to a birth rate of 24.8 per thousand of the population. The births and birth rates in the Borough during the last eight years were :—

	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	1919.	1920.
Births.....	129	126	102	111	85	94	108	178
Birth rate ...	18.0	17.5	14.2	15.1	14.1	13.6	15.1	24.8

Birth rate for England and Wales, **25.4.**

Deaths.

The total number of deaths from all causes registered in the district was **129**, to which must be added **3** deaths of residents not registered in the district, making a total of **132**. From this have to be deducted **35** deaths of non-residents which occurred in the Workhouse and St. Leonard's Hospital, making the nett deaths **97** equivalent to a death rate of **12.2** per thousand. The deaths and death rates during the last eight years were :—

	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	1919.	1920.
Deaths registered.....	129	141	163	126	99	143	160	129
Deaths belonging to the District	75	111	134	105	74	100	127	97
Death rate	10.4	15.3	18.5	14.5	12.3	14.5	18.6	12.2

Death rate for England and Wales, **12.4.**

The following table shows the relative age mortality among residents :—

Under 1 year.	1-2 years.	2-5 years.	5-15 years.	15-25 years.	25-45 years.	45-65 years.	Over 65 years.
13	1	3	2	3	5	20	45

Infant Mortality.

The deaths registered of children under one year of age number **13**. Among these, **6** were due to premature birth, **1** was due to broncho pneumonia, **1** to spina bifida, **3** to marasmus, **1** to congenital syphitis, and **1** to unknown cause. The Infant Mortality for the last eight years was :—

	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.	1919.	1920.
Deaths of children under 1 year...	5	9	19	10	3	6	6	13
Rate per 1000 of births registered	39.0	71.4	186.2	90.0	35.3	64.0	55.5	73.8

Infant Mortality for England and Wales, **80.**

General Mortality.

Among the deaths registered were 2 from Influenza, 5 from Bronchitis, 9 from Phthisis, 8 from Heart Disease, and 19 from Cancer.

Compared with last year shows marked fall in the number of deaths from Influenza (2 instead of 22), and an increase in the number of deaths from Cancer (19 instead of 11).

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF DISTRICT.

Water Supply.

The town is supplied entirely from the Waterworks. The water has been pure and ample in quantity. The supply was intermittent. During the hours from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., there was a plentiful supply. The fact that the water was turned off during the night was inconvenient in the case of any medical or nursing emergency.

Average daily consumption per head, 17 gallons. This includes the supply for trade purposes.

Drainage and Sewerage.

Water carriage system throughout.

The sewerage is collected into tanks at the Sewerage Station, from whence it is pumped up to the contact beds by steam power supplied by the Refuse Destructor. A fair standard of effluent has been maintained.

There are two huts erected by the West Suffolk County Council for Small Holders within the boundary of the Borough. Earth closets are used in these.

Closet Accommodation.

Water closets are entirely used with the above exception, but there are many places where two or more houses use one water closet. There are still many closets without flushing cisterns.

House Refuse.

This is collected once a week and dealt with in Refuse Destructor ; 1496 loads disposed of during the year. Many houses still have fixed receptacles for refuse. This is very undesirable and moveable ash-bins with proper coverings would enable more frequent collection and would improve to a large degree the sanitation of the Borough.

General Sanitation.

The following is a statement of the number of notices, inspections, &c., made during the year.

Number of written notices sent out respecting defects and nuisances	...	37
Additional premises provided with Town water	... ..	2
Additional closets provided with flushing cisterns	... ..	1
Number of houses and premises connected with the sewers or re-drained	...	13
Number of new houses completed	... ..	1
Number of houses disinfected	... ..	28
Number of schools disinfected	... ..	—
Number of nuisances abated	... ..	50
Number of slaughter-house inspections (made monthly)	... ..	18
Number of dairies' and cowsheds' inspections (made monthly)	... ..	18
Number of pigstyes inspected	... ..	12
Number of bakehouses inspected	... ..	11
Number of cases of overcrowding abated	... ..	1

The systematic and general inspections, as well as the sanitary work of the Borough, have been carried out by Mr. Rampling, Borough Surveyor.

Lodging Houses.

There is only one in the Town. This has been visited at intervals. No breach of the regulations has been found.

Factories and Workshops.

These have undergone inspection, and all have sufficient sanitary accommodation. One silk factory has been enlarged. No complaint received from H.M. Inspector of Factories.

Offensive Trades.

There are now none in the Town.

Schools.

There are three Elementary Schools, all in good sanitary condition with Town water supply. The action taken to prevent the spread of infectious diseases is : (1) In the case of Scarlet Fever, to exclude all children from infected house for one week after isolation of case and disinfection of house ; (2) In the case of Measles, to exclude from school children of the house who have not previously had measles.

The Medical Inspection of children is under the control of the County Medical Officer of Health.

FOOD.

Milk Supply.

There is ample milk supply in the Town, of a good quality.

Epidemic Infantile Diarrhoea is of rare occurrence.

The dairies and cow sheds are kept in fair order, but are not in good situations, being in most cases surrounded by dwelling houses.

The Model Regulations made in August, 1906, are in force.

Milk (mothers' and children's) Order, 1918. No action taken by local authority under this order.

Bake Houses.

There are fifteen bakehouses in the Town. No breaches of regulations were found when visited. There are no underground bakehouses in the Town.

Meat Supply.

- (1) Meat inspection is carried out by surprise visits occasionally.
- (2) There is no public abattoir so inspection cannot be carried out in any other way. A public abattoir is very desirable.
- (3) Two lots of meat were condemned, 3 carcasses in all.
- (4) Slaughter Houses In 1914 In Jan., 1920 In Dec., 1920
 10. 9. 10.

Sale of Food and Drugs Act.

No action was required under this Act.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifiable Diseases.

The following diseases have been notified during the year :—

- (1) Scarlet Fever, nine cases. These were scattered as regards time and were extremely difficult to trace. On one occasion four cases arose from one slight unrecognised case.
- (2) Diphtheria, four cases. All were sporadic and could not be traced.
- (3) Malaria, one new case and one transferred from Colchester, all ex-soldiers.
- (4) Puerperal Septicaemic, one case recovered.
- (5) Ophthalmic Neonatorum, one case.
- (6) Erysipelas, one case.

Diphtheria Antitoxin is held in readiness by me and is used promptly.

Bacteriological aids to diagnosis are provided by the West Suffolk County Council. These are not used to any great extent.

Non-notifiable Infectious Diseases.

Early in the year there was a severe epidemic of measles. This involved the closure of the Sudbury Voluntary School Infants' section on three separate occasions. The disease was fortunately not associated with severe complications and was in many cases mild, but the spread was extremely rapid. Two deaths however arose from the disease. The parents in very many cases were culpably negligent with regard to the precautions necessary to check the spread. The Heads of schools were prompt in notification of disease.

Tuberculosis.

Pulmonary. Fourteen new cases notified during year. Of these two did not reside in the Borough, and four of these cases probably arose in the Army.

Of the fourteen cases notified, six died during the year. Three other deaths occurred amongst those previously notified.

Other Forms of this disease notified were :—Two cases of infection of the skin, one case of spinal disease, two cases of infection of glands, and one of meninges.

THE TREATMENT of Tuberculosis is under the control of the West Suffolk County Council.

The cases notified are reported at once to the Tuberculosis Officer.

The action taken by the local authority is :—

- (1) Inspection of house and sanitation, and where found defective, the matter is attended to.
- (2) Disinfection of house (*a*) after removal of case to sanatorium, (*b*) after death.

The County scheme includes provision of limited Sanatorium treatment and domiciliary treatment with periodic visits of Health Visitor and Tuberculosis Officer.

The provision of Sanatorium treatment is inadequate, and needs urgent attention. There is great need for some provision for the isolation of advanced cases.

Venereal Disease.

This is under the control of the West Suffolk County Council.

Free treatment is provided at the following centres :—

- (1) Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge.
- (2) East Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital, Ipswich.
- (3) Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, Norwich.
- (4) Essex County Hospital, Colchester.

The provision made is adequate, but there is some difficulty in getting patients to travel the distances to obtain treatment.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

This is also under the County Council. A Welfare Centre is established in the Town, and there is a fair attendance.

One case of Puerperal Fever occurred.

One case of Ophthalmic Neonatorum occurred during the year. This recovered rapidly.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

STAFF. One Sanitary Inspector.

HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION. Small isolation hospital available with two wards. A Nurse is obtained when necessary. The Hospital has been open on and off almost the whole year. There is need for another large ward and for an observation ward and better accommodation for the Nurses.

ADOPTIVE ACTS in force. None.

The arrangements for chemical and bacteriological work are under the control of the West Suffolk County Council.

HOUSING CONDITIONS.

1.—GENERAL.

1	Estimated population	...	...	...	...	...	7097
2	General death-rate	...	...	...	...	...	1262
3	Death-rate from tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	1.4
4	Infantile mortality	...	...	...	...	...	73.8
5	Number of dwelling-houses of all classes	...	...	...	...	...	1792
6	Number of working-class dwelling-houses	...	...	...	...	...	1617
7	Number of new working-class houses erected	...	...	...	...	...	1

2.—UNFIT DWELLING-HOUSES.

I.—Inspection.

1	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	1617
2	Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	1
3	Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	10

II.—Remedy of Defects without Service of formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	10
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III.—Action under Statutory Powers.

A. Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919.

1	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	none
2	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit—	
	(a) by owners	none
	(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	none
3	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close	none

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

1	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	none
2	Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied—	
	(a) by owners	none
	(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	none

C. Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909.

1	Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	one
2	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	one
3	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit	none
4	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	none
5	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	none

Staff engaged on housing work, one Housing Officer.

Shortage of Houses.

Estimated	20
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This figure does not take into account houses of a low standard which would be closed if better accommodation were available.

Overcrowding.

There are no very serious cases of overcrowding. Those which have been discovered during the year have been corrected by families moving to larger houses.

Fitness of Houses.

- (1) (a) General standard of housing in the district is a fair one except in two or three areas.
- (b) The defects outstanding in the areas where the standard is not good are
 - (a) Building of a poor type.
 - (b) Insufficient ventilation.
 - (c) Insufficient air space around the houses.
 - (d) Insufficient closet accommodation.
- (2) The difficulties in remedying unfitness are
 - (a) Shortage of available houses for people to live in if closing orders are made.
 - (b) Shortage of labour.
 - (c) Shortage of material.
- (3) (a) Every house has its own water supply from the town main.
- (b) The closet accommodation in many instances is insufficient. This is only the case in the older houses. This shortage of closet accommodation remains as it was a year ago. Little can be done in the absence of by-laws

Unhealthy Areas.

No action has been taken during the year as regards unhealthy areas.

By-laws.

There are no by-laws relating to houses. There is great need for such by-laws if the condition of the town is to be improved.

R. W. RIX, M.B., F.R.C.S.